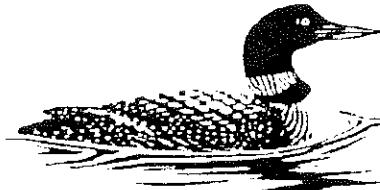


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# AWAKE

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ASSOCIATION WORKING AGAINST KEWEENAW EXPLOITATION

RECEIVED D

JUN 17 1998

REGULATION DEVELOPMENT BRANCH  
U.S. EPA, REGION IV

Mr. Carl Nash (Attn Ms. Victoria Hayden)  
Regulation Development Section (AR-18J)  
Air Programs Branch, Air and Radiation Division  
USEPA, Region 5  
77 West Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Mr. Nash:

We are not qualified to discuss a detailed scientific relationship between Michigan's Rule 901 and National ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) and related air quality goals of the Federal Clean Air Act.

However, we are well aware that during recent years many other steps have been taken by the state of Michigan which have effectively negated the public's input into environmental matters, mainly by removing intervening neutral boards and rules easily comprehensible to citizens lacking formal technical training. These moves to streamline the Department of Environmental Quality may have added to the agency's efficiency, but have also created a no man's land between the public and the final very few decision makers in Lansing.

Rule 901, in its simplicity and supportability, works for ordinary people who are most likely to notice and to suffer from air pollution and odor nuisances. If USEPA removes 901 from the Michigan State Implementation Plan, such action could be used as a precedent for MDEQ to repeal it altogether.

This rule is a workable and worthwhile remnant of the strong environmental stance once credited to Michigan by all other states. It should not be touched.

Sincerely,

*Janet M. Avery 6/13/98*

Janet M. Avery  
President, AWAKE

## State & Regional

# Will the governor find it easy being green?

By JUSTIN HYDE

Associated Press Writer  
LANSING (AP) —

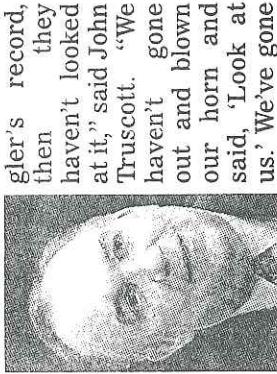
Gov. John Engler has started showing his environmental colors — but environmental groups say they're the wrong shade of green. His State of the State speech was full of praise for the good work his administration has done, and included \$400 million in pollution cleanup proposals.

But advocates see more political motives behind Engler's plans, and some say what he's proposed doesn't go nearly far enough.

"The state of Michigan is blessed by the Great Lakes. They certainly are our most valuable resource," said Tim Eder, manager of water quality programs for the National Wildlife Foundation's Great Lakes center. "But Governor Engler has not demonstrated that he has the reverence or respect for that heritage."

The governor's spokesman disagrees.

If environmentalists "are less than impressed with Gov. Eng-



Engler's record, then they haven't looked at it," said John Truscott. "We haven't gone out and blown our horn and said, 'Look at us.' We've gone out and cleaned up the lakes

ENGLER

and the air." Among the environmental accomplishments Engler pointed to in his State of the State address were improvements in drinking water quality and air quality in southeast Michigan.

"Indeed, Detroit and Grand Rapids have the distinction of being the first major metropolitan areas in the U.S. redesignated as reaching attainment of federal clean air standards," he said. "I have always maintained that solid economic growth is compatible with sound environmental management."

It's that kind of statement that concerns groups that watch the Jameson said the first time he heard about a new state plan for agriculture pollution prevention

environment, said Rick Jameson, executive director of Michigan United Conservation Clubs.

"All we hear from the governor's chief environmental officer is how quickly he can hand out permits," Jameson said. "They don't have a good monitoring system to say we're doing better or worse."

Among the chief complaints of environmental groups:

— The governor has locked the public out of many environmental decisions by removing public boards and reorganizing departments.

"His whole approach to the environment has been cutting citizens out of the loop so they don't know if the air is clean enough to breath or the water is clean enough to drink," said Alison Horton, the Michigan director of the Sierra Club.

— Businesses' influence over environmental policy has increased.

Jameson said the first time he heard about a new state plan for agriculture pollution prevention

## Top environmental issues of 1997

**JORDAN RIVER:** During his State of the State speech last year, Gov. Engler called for protecting the 22,000-acre Jordan River valley and other pristine natural sites while respecting private property rights. A businessman had wanted to drill for gas in the area, and environmentalists had said it would set a bad precedent. Earlier this year, the state completed a swap for mineral rights in the Jordan River area. The businessman, Walter Zaremba, has been turned down for a drilling permit, but still might appeal.

**SLANT DRILLING:** A furor erupted in June as the state was preparing to allow a Canadian company to drill for gas and oil beneath Lake Michigan. After public hearings, Engler appointed a panel of scientists to study the plan. The panel said it was not harmful, but did recommend keeping the well at least 1,500 feet from the shoreline.

**FISH ADVISORIES:** Once again, the Engler administration clashed with the Environmental Protection Agency over advisories for fish caught in the Great Lakes. The

EPA contend the state did not provide proper warnings to average fishermen. The state countered that it was trying to protect vulnerable people, such as children, while keeping the advisories reasonable for adults. The EPA put out its own advisories for Michigan last summer. This year, a panel of scientists revised the state's advisories.

**EARLY RETIREMENT:** Many environmental groups said the state's early retirement program hit state environmental agencies hard. More than 200 Department of Natural Resources workers and 78 Department of Environmental Quality employees left. State officials said the losses were tough, but that the agencies would recover without services suffering.

over many topics, including parks funding and advisories on eating fish from inland lakes.

— Engler has clashed with environmental groups on many issues.

The two sides have sparred

was in the newspaper.